

### **Consultation and Coordination with Others**

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## ***5. Consultation and Coordination with Others***

### **Consultation Summary**

The planning process for the Great Dismal Swamp and the Nansemond National Wildlife Refuges began in August, 2001. It was then the core planning team, consisting of field staff and staff from the Service's Northeast Regional Office, began the process of identifying needs and direction for development of the comprehensive plan.

A mailing list was compiled of nearly 600 contacts of individuals and groups including adjacent landowners, federal, state and local governing representatives, North Carolina and Virginia resource agencies, environmental organizations, sportsmen's groups, local businesses and other interested and affected people. In December, 2001, a newsletter was sent to everyone on the mailing list explaining the CCP process and identifying current issues on the refuges. The newsletter was also made available at the refuge headquarters, open house and scoping meetings, and distributed at all refuge outreach events during that winter and spring.

Contained in the newsletter was a workbook which included questions to aid in the collection of the public's ideas, concerns, and suggestions on important issues associated with managing the Great Dismal Swamp and the Nansemond National Wildlife Refuges. More than 100 workbooks were returned with written responses by summer, 2002, with additional written responses received before the close of the year.

Four scoping and open house information meetings were held on January 8, 10, 22, and 24, 2002, in Elizabeth City and Gatesville, North Carolina, and in Suffolk and Chesapeake, Virginia, respectively. Meetings were advertised locally through news releases, paid advertisements, and through our mailing list. Approximately 290 people attended the meetings. Each began with an opportunity for guests to visit a gallery of prepared refuge exhibits and speak with attending staff. This period was followed by a staff presentation on the refuges, the Refuge System, and the planning process. Registered speakers were then allowed to make comments or ask the staff questions before the group. Each meeting concluded with questions and comments from the floor. Participants were encouraged to actively express their opinions

and suggestions. Public Comments and questions included those on forest management, water management, wildlife concerns, and public use. However, public use issues and improvement of visitor services dominated discussion during all four meetings.

The complete planning team, which consisted of the core team with the addition of representatives from FWS Virginia Field Office, the Army Corps of Engineers, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, and Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, met in February, 2002, to review the public comments and explore management options.

An *Update* newsletter was distributed in March, 2002, summarizing public comments from the workbook, other written comments, and comments from the scoping meetings. Another meeting of the planning team was held in June, 2002, to review considerations for management objectives and strategies, and to discuss a Wilderness Study Area proposal. The core planning team then began working to formulate specific alternatives, objectives, and strategies that addressed each of the envisioned goals.

Additional meetings and workshops were held with Congressional representatives, refuge partners and other interested parties to discuss issues of habitat management and public use, among other topics. This phase of the process lasted into the spring of 2003 when a range of management alternatives was finalized. By June, 2003, the team was ready to consider environmental consequences for each alternative.

Upon release of this draft Environmental Assessment/ Comprehensive Conservation Plan (EA/CCP), public meetings and open houses will be scheduled to provide the opportunity for comment. At the conclusion of the thirty day public review period, all substantive comments will be addressed and the report revised accordingly. Unless a significant issue(s) arise that has not been previously identified, a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be prepared and issued with the final EA/CCP. A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the final report will be published in the Federal Register. Following the thirty day review period on the final report the FONSI will be finalized for the Regional Director's approval. Another thirty day grace period will be provided before implementation of the preferred alternative.

## **The Planning Team**

Bill Perry  
Planning Team Leader  
USFWS, Region 5 Regional Office

Coordinated field and regional office communications; Team leader  
December, 2005, to present.

Gib Chase  
Planning Team Leader, Retired  
USFWS, Region 5 Regional Office

Facilitated meetings, provided guidance in interpreting the planning  
policy; coordinated field and regional office communications; reviewed draft  
sections. Team leader August, 2001, through December, 2005.

Suzanne Baird  
Refuge Manager  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Participated in all phases and sections. Team member November, 2005, to  
present.

Lloyd Culp  
Former Refuge Manager  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Facilitated meetings; co-author of the CCP; participated in all phases and  
sections. Team member August, 2001, through August, 2005.

Deloras Freeman  
CCP Field Planning Team Coordinator  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Field project coordinator; coordinated public involvement, participated in  
development of public use objectives and strategies; co-authored sections of  
Chapters 1, 3, and 5; draft development, formatting, and editing.

Michelle Banton  
Civil Engineer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Provided consultation and coordination with the COE, particularly on strategies regarding the Dismal Swamp Canal, the Lake Drummond Reservation, and hydrology issues.

Jennifer Blount  
Former SCEP- Student Trainee  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Assisted in development of public use objectives and strategies; assisted with scoping meetings; team member from August, 2001, through August, 2002.

Tim Craig  
Fire Management Officer  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided input on strategies involving prescribed burning and fire suppression.

Teresa Cherry  
Outdoor Recreation Planner, Retired  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided assistance with the development of objectives and strategies for public use; proofing. Team member August, 2001, through January, 2004.

Ralph Keel  
Wildlife Biologist, Retired  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided input on biological elements of the plan; assisted with development of objectives and strategies for wildlife issues. Team member August, 2001, through January, 2004.

Cindy Lane  
Deputy Refuge Manager  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided input on formulation of goals, objectives, strategies; developed cost estimates; reviewing assistance.

Karen Mayne  
Biologist, Ecological Services  
USFWS, Region 5 Virginia Field Office

Provided assistance regarding strategies for federal-listed species found on or historically occurring on the refuges, and on habitat management issues.

Bryan Poovey  
Forester  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided input for the Wilderness Review; coordinated GIS imagery; assisted in development of resource management objectives and strategies; assisted with scoping meetings; proofing assistance.

Julie Rowand  
Northeast Region Environmental Education Coordinator

Provided regional guidance; assisted in formation of public use objectives, strategies; co-authored sections of alternatives pertaining to public use.

David Rowe  
District Wildlife Biologist  
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

Provided input on hunting and habitat management strategies from a State perspective.

Don Schwab  
Wildlife Diversity Biologist  
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries  
/Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided input on hunting and habitat management strategies from a State perspective. State representative August, 2001, through September, 2004. Refuge wildlife biologist and team member September, 2004, to present.

Joel Scussel  
Civil Engineer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Provided consultation and coordination with the COE, particularly on strategies regarding the Dismal Swamp Canal, the Lake Drummond Reservation, and hydrology issues.

Clint Williams  
Facility Manager  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Provided input on strategies regarding refuge facilities; assisted with scoping meetings.



## **Others Who Helped in the Planning Process**

Jamie Christensen  
Graphic Services  
Worldview Solutions

Production of GIS imagery.

Bobby Clontz  
Environmental Consultant  
Garrison Forestry Services

Co-author of Chapter 2, Affected Environment; author of Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences.

Sally Leary  
Office Assistant  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Proofing assistance; administrative support.

Helen Marlin  
Refuge Clerk  
Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

Proofing assistance; administrative support.

